

Arizona Writing Standard Performance Level Descriptors Grade 8

Exceeds the Standard – Students who score in this level illustrate a superior academic performance as evidenced by achievement that is substantially beyond the goal for all students. Students who perform at this level demonstrate the ability to identify and apply good written communications by developing an exceptionally clear and focused main idea, constructing fluid sentences and transitions, providing an inviting beginning, a strong middle, and a clear resolution, and using conventions effectively to enhance readability.

Meets the Standard – Students who score in this level demonstrate a solid academic performance on subject matter as reflected by the writing standard. Students who perform at this level are able to identify elements of good communication and demonstrate consistent awareness of writing conventions. They can develop a main idea with supporting details, organize with a beginning, middle, and end using appropriate transitions, use accurate, specific, and purposeful words, and construct sentences that invite fluid reading.

Approaches the Standard – Students who score in this level show partial understanding of the knowledge and application of the skills that are fundamental for proficient work. Students who perform at this level show the ability to use some of the basic elements of written communication by demonstrating limited awareness of writing purpose or engagement of the audience, attempting to organize, using general or vague words, and constructing sentences that may be awkward and a structure that obscures meaning. Some gaps in knowledge and skills are evident and may require additional instruction and remediation in order to achieve a satisfactory level of understanding.

Falls Far Below the Standard – Students who score in this level may have significant gaps and limited knowledge and skills that are necessary to satisfactorily meet the state’s writing standard. Students will usually require a considerable amount of additional instruction and remediation in order to achieve a satisfactory level of understanding.

Students at the “Exceeds the Standard” level generally know the skills required at the “Meets” and “Approaches” levels and are able to:	Students at the “Meets the Standard” level generally know the skills required at the “Approaches” level and are able to:	Students at the “Approaches the Standard” level generally know and are able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear, focused main idea or topic appropriate to a prompt. • Provide vivid supporting details. • Include an inviting beginning, a strong middle, and a clear resolution with effective transitions. • Organize ideas in a clearly defined structure. • Write with a strong sense of audience. • Use specific, vivid language effectively. • Construct fluid sentences of varying structure and length. • Use conventions effectively to enhance readability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a main idea or topic related to a prompt. • Provide details that support the main idea or topic. • Develop a clear beginning, middle, and end with transitions. • Use accurate, specific words. • Demonstrate an awareness of audience. • Construct sentences that invite fluid reading. • Demonstrate grade-level appropriate conventions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write about a main idea or topic in a somewhat unclear or undeveloped manner. • Include details; however, details may be unrelated to the main idea or topic. • Organize writing; however, writing may lack a clear beginning, middle, or end and transitions may be repetitive or unused. • Demonstrate limited awareness or engagement of the audience. • Use general or vague words with limited range. • Construct sentences that may be awkward and a structure that obscures meaning.

These descriptors do not include all the skills and knowledge as contained in the Writing Standard.